ZERO

GAMES ST AMIGA PC CONSOLES ISSUE MINUS ONE FREE

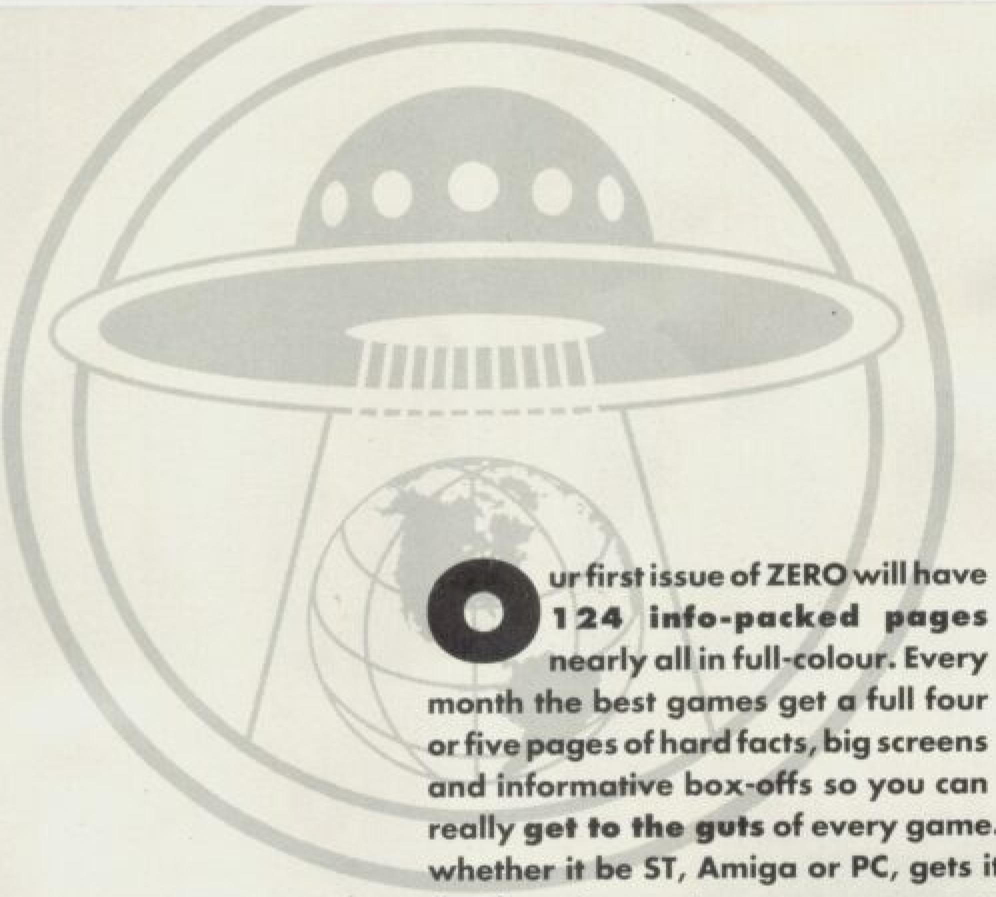


BATMAN

WAIT TILL THEY GET A LOAD OF THIS!

XENON II **MEGABLAST:** Bros are back with a cat among the pigeons

CONSOLE ACTION! Exclusive Konix Screens **WIN!** 3 Amigas and 3 STs



ZERO – It's Zany, Entertaining, Readable and Original. And here's our 16-page pilot issue to give you a taste of what's to come.

Our first issue of ZERO will have **124 info-packed pages** nearly all in full-colour. Every month the best games get a full four or five pages of hard facts, big screens and informative box-offs so you can really **get to the guts** of every game. Plus each format, whether it be ST, Amiga or PC, gets its own full in-depth review, not a meagre paragraph. What's more each version will be written by an expert on that machine and on the type of game. Check out our review of *Xenon II - Megablast* and you'll get the picture. Apart from all the full-colour **reviews and previews** we'll be offering in-depth features on anything from joysticks to cutting a record using your computer's musical and sampling ability. Not forgetting our head-to-head on *Falcon*. Duncan **'Colonel Love Piston'** MacDonald takes on Martin 'Stumpy Bader' Moth in a **flight to the death!**

CONSOLE ACTION
SCOOP! First Konix games unmasked!
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BATMAN II

Jokers aside – it's holy s**t-hot!

PAGE 8

XENON II MEGABLAST

Get real, granny!

Console owners won't get left out either – you'll be getting your own **dedicated console magazine** full of reviews, news, hints, tips, maps and competitions. Take a look at *Console Action* and see for yourself.

And if all that wasn't enough we'll be running a whole load of other **brilliant stuff** too – hints, tips, maps, competitions, adventures and previews. And all in ZERO's **original style** of design and editorial. If you're a **games-player** with street cred you can't afford to miss it! And even if you aren't you still can't!

Teresa

The Publisher



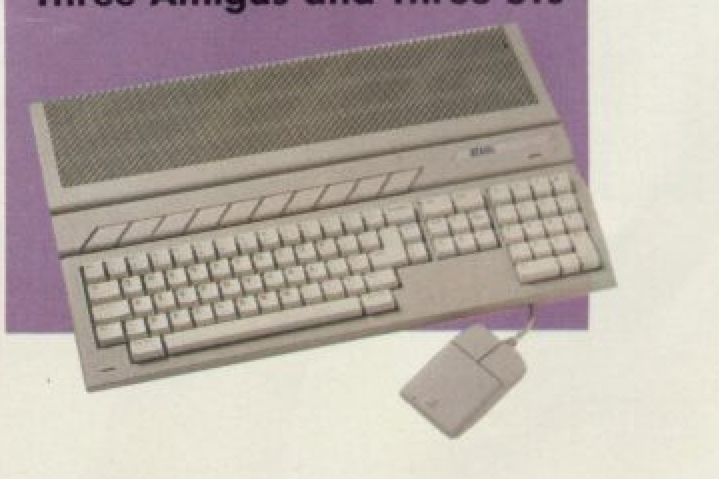
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Check out what's in the first issue of ZERO...

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WIN!

Three Amigas and Three STs



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BATMAN

The game of the movie

Ocean had the option on one of two film licence deals: *I've Got A Ukelele Up My Ladder,* the epic George Formby hit from 1949 and *Batman (The Movie),* the 1989 box office smash. A coin was flipped to decide which one to go for, and after a 'best out of nine' Ocean plumped for the Batman licence. *Duncan MacDonald* popped over to Ocean to see...

If Batman really was a 'bat-man' then he wouldn't be quite the infallible superhero he is on film: for instance....

You've seen the adverts, you've worn the T-shirt (possibly), and by now you've very probably seen the film. So what more can you expect? A long wait till *Batman II,* by which time your Batman underpants will not only be hopelessly out of date but also hideously stained? Months upon months of bat-free boredom? Actually this isn't the case, because hot on the heels of *Batman The Movie* comes *Batman (The Computer Game of The Movie),* and it looks to be a little bit of a goody.

Ocean has followed the plot of the film rather closely (well, they'd be pretty stupid if they hadn't really, let's face it) thanks to the original storyboards they secured aeons ago (while the film was still being shot) – which enabled them to get the game written, coded and ready to hit the streets at this oh-so important 'bat-fever' moment.

His bedroom floor would be totally covered in guano - so you'd probably find David Attenborough in there as well.

The game itself is split into four parts. Firstly, it's The Chemical Factory, where the Joker has his encounter with the vat of boiling custard (or acid or whatever) which turns him from a 'normal geezer' into the heinous cackling clown. Your job (as Batman) is to pursue the Joker across (and up and down) the beautifully detailed building interior and try to, er, kill him. Mind you, that's not so easy – given that there are about 467 trillion of his minions trying to stop you.... and cunningly disguised 'traps' under disappearing floorboards.... and droplets of lethal chemical waste dripping down all over the shop.... and, well, lots of other things. Still, you've got your bat-rope swingy thing (à la *Bionic Commando)* to help you get around.

And he wouldn't catch many 'crims' running round in concentric circles from six to twelve o'clock every evening.

From the Chemical Factory you move to what is essentially level two – the Batmobile bit. You're in control of the super new revamped Bat-motor – and that's what you have to do.... motor. Motor at full speed, in pursuit of the Joker, along the Gotham City streets, trying not to be hemmed in by the cars driven by his henchmen, and following the arrows on the tarmac which tell you when to 'hang' a right or left. You have to keep incredibly alert for this – it's so easy to overshoot. Take a corner successfully and the horizontally scrolling city backdrop sort of flips round as your car turns 'into the screen' – after which the view switches back to side on again. It's really quite effective.

In level three (if you get to it) you take to the skies in the Batwing – it seems that the Joker has tethered numerous deadly gas-filled balloons to the street, and your task is to slice through the cords with the bat-like wings of your, erm, Batwing, so they'll drift 'harmlessly' upwards. While you're doing this, you're also under attack from loads of helicopters – so it's not exactly a stroll in the woods. The whole level is viewed from behind, much like *Space Harrier* or *Thunderblade* or *Afterburner.*

Finally it's back to the vertically/horizontally scrolling platformy type scenario of level one – only this time you're inside a church. You start at the bottom, as does The Joker – who's hightailing it to the roof, where an escape helicopter is waiting. Who'll make it there first? Erm, the Joker probably, if you're anywhere near as useless at controlling Batman as I am!

Anyway, that (in a bat-shell) is that. Watch out for the final reviews of the game, as it could well be a corker. In the meantime, go and wash those Batman underpants, and scour the news pages to see who picked up the George Formby licence.



I knew I shouldn't have taken those 'brylcream application tips' from Leslie Crowther....



Yowch! Bullets in the bat-bot! Soft landings below, though, courtesy of the geezer in the





Yikes - toxic gas ahoy. Erm.... this Bat-person is in urgent need of a change of direction. Tricky. Um... Oh dear....



Blimey, it's Charles Bronson. Oy, Charlie, it's me, Michael Keaton!! Don't shoot!! You're in the wrong computer game!! Don't shoot!! Please, please!! This is a church!! You can't fire a gun in here!!



It doesn't take a protractor, calculator and an arc-predicting equation to work out where these bat-boots are going to plant themselves.... Testies ahoy!!!

CONSOLE ACTION

It's here! At last! The first and only monthly mini-magazine for the console owner - *Console Action*. It's bulging at the seams with the best ever reviews, the fastest news and the hottest console tips maps and interviews... every month. If you're a real hep console addict, there's only going to be one place to get a regular fix - and let's face it - it's here!

We've gone undercover for this first 'mini-episode' of *Console Action*. Dressed in dark clothes and big hats we sneaked into the offices of Argonaut to find out all about the Konix console: and the 'free' game that's going to be bundled with it. Join us........



THE SYSTEM

The basic system consists of the console unit, with an integral handlebar/steering wheel/aircraft control column. It has dual foot pedals for driving games, and a joystick which is based on the brilliant (and tried and tested) Konix Speedking. Games are stored on the standard 16-bit three and a quarter inch disks.

The internal storage capacity is 256K, and at the heart of the system is a rather funky 32-bit processor, which can generate 4000 colours and produce CD quality sound. The speed of the computer allows the presentation of virtually 'real' 3-D screen effects, as opposed to the more usual 'planes' or 'layers' of the 16 and 8 bitters.



THE CHAIR

Yes. That again. The Power Chair which promises arcade sensations in the comfort of your own drawing room. Basically, no-one outside of Konix and Argonaut has actually seen a real one, but here are the specifications: it's got (quote) 'powerful motors' that 'respond to your driving in an unimaginably realistic way'. The TV is mounted on the chair so it moves 'with you' for total realism (unless you use a giant 46 inch screen job, in which case we suspect that the whole thing might fall over). For full security there's a seat belt attached, and there's a full size cover that drapes over the player AND the chair itself: so people who see a giant globule wibbling around in the corner of the room won't know that it's actually YOU in the middle of a game.



LIGHT GUN

The brilliant thing about the Konix light gun, and where it departs from others on the market, is that it actually has a recoil action. Press the trigger, the gun fires, and you'll get a realistic bruise on your shoulder. (Unless you're using it in pistol mode, in which case you won't). It's got autofire too - so as well as being a rifle and a pistol, it's also a machine gun.

You've probably read a lot about the Konix Console system over the last few months – it has, after all, generated a 'fair rake' of publicity. Essentially, it's a 32-bit games machine with the potential for hundreds of on-screen colours and incredible sound. If you add to this the list of hardware add-ons, it means that the Konix should be the most impressive home games system ever in the history of the universe. In theory that is. We chatted to Richard Clovis, Software Manager at Argonaut – the programming house who are writing the game that'll be bundled 'free' with the package. (This game has no name – to avoid confusion let's call it *Nigel*).

Nigel is a fairly typical motorbike racing game – along the lines of *Super Hang On.* Why, we wondered, has Konix chosen this particular scenario for their 'taster' software pack? Obviously they hope to show up existing race games on other formats, and prove that arcade quality can be experienced in the safety of one's own home. But surely there's more to it than that? Aaaah yes. The Konix system has got handlebars, hasn't it?

Nigel begins with the usual options screen, allowing you to select one (from eight) of the world's most famous racing circuits. Having made your choice you're presented with a demo sequence of the course from the viewpoint of an automatic 'camera bike', as soon as the demo lap is completed it's your turn to take the controls.

POST HASTE

So to start *Console Action* rolling, send in your comments, hints, tips and gripes!
ZERO,
Dennis Publishing,
14 Rathbone Place,
London
W1P 1DE

The colour and resolution of the graphics seem to be about the same as those on the Amiga or ST – but instead of the occasional signs to be found on the trackside of most 16-bit racing games, here are French Chateaux, hotels, palm trees, rocks, bridges and arches – all rather large – and scrolling towards you at a rate you won't have seen outside of an Arcade. And – apparently – additional sections are going to be put into the game: stunt driving ramps and that kind of gear.

"What we've done," remarked Richard Clovis, "is in my opinion, miles better than anything that's been done on the Amiga". He was also enthusiastic about the sound capabilities of the Konix:

"It could be amazing. You can do anything – theoretically – with the sound. You can emulate any synthesizer that's ever been made".

Is there a 'but', we wondered?

"Well, to use it to its full potential will mean a lot of work, and I don't think anyone has had time for that yet...."



HELICOPTER STICK

For the simulation freaks, what we have here is basically a joystick in that you can control Up/Down/Left and Right, but (and it's a big but), you also have the power to rotate (or not rotate). Mike Smith should practice with one before he takes the lovely Sarah up for another 'spin'.

Aha!

Then we got onto the subject of the Power Chair. We (and we're not alone on this) are slightly unsure about the feasibility of this piece of 'kit' – at under two hundred quid, surely the quality isn't going to be that hot?

"Yes, yes," replied Richard. "I was unsure about it as well until I chatted to Chris Green from Konix. He convinced me that it's a serious thing and that they **are** going to be bringing it out. Having seen a prototype, I'm convinced that they're doing the right thing – it's very cleverly designed".

So it's not going to fall over then?

"Certainly not. It's made of strong steel and looks very solid. I sat in a working prototype and I thought it was great! It's certainly better than a lot of stuff in the arcades".

So you think they're going to bring it out and it's going to be 'the business'?

"Yes. Well, after all, they've got a lot to lose if things go wrong".

That's true, but even if the chair never surfaces there's one thing for sure: the console itself will. And if it does get the user support that Konix is hoping for, then the knock-on effect will ensure that the machine **will** eventually be used to its full 32-bit potential – which is good news for everybody.



This 'shifting at speed' takes its toll on the old bladder. Hmm, one of those trees should be adequate cover for a quick 'wee wee'

Konix Products,
Unit 35, Rassau
Industrial Estate
Ebbw Vale,
Gwent NP3 5SD.



Some of the country's top software writers are working on titles for the Konix system – one of the most famous being Jeff Minter (that jolly nice hippy-looking fellow with the hair). His rather weird game *Attack Of The Mutant Camels* should be rather, erm – weird. Other producers include Electrocoin (*Mr Do's Wild Ride*), Vivid Image (*Hammer Fist*), System 3 (*Last Ninja II*) and Logotron – who are converting the Amiga smash *Star Ray* (which promises to fully utilise the ability to have 256 colours on-screen). Check out the next episode of *Console Action* for more news on Konix games.

review

XENON II
MEGABLAST

Bros are back! After their two top-ten chart hits *Xenon* and *Speedball*, the band have reformed - but without Craig *(surely you mean Ken. Ed)* to write their newie *Xenon II - Megablast* with their new backing band Bomb the Bass, and their new label Imageworks.

Everybody knows who the Bitmap Brothers are. Everybody! If you don't, you've either been in solitary confinement or living in Hemel Hempstead for the last three years. They're the three geezers who've been allocated their own shelf in the library of computer gaming history, because of titles like *Xenon* and *Speedball* - two of the hottest games ever. Now they're back (back back), and likely to earn not just another shelf, but an entire bookcase with their extraordinary new release on the Imageworks label - *Xenon II - Megablast* .

The scenario is as loopy as ever. Several evil blighters from the future have decided to take up a new terrorist YTS scheme. They've planted several bombs in five crucial periods in Earth's history, hoping to upset evolution and give Darwin something to think about. AND kill the entire human race to boot. You have been picked (being courageous, intelligent, gullible etc) as the one-man crusader who's got to travel across the five time zones defusing the bombs in an attempt to save the world (again)!



These things are like clumps of orange fungus that hunt you down, gargling and spitting out bombs.

Xenon II is basically a standard (but I use this word loosely) vertically-scrolling shoot 'em up with three levels of parallax scrolling (i.e. there's a real feeling of depth), in which you fly about in a spaceship. The creatures and scenery change with every time zone.

The first level is set in palaeozoic times, atmospherically daubed with centipede-oranges, snail-yellows and granite-greys. The setting is a rocky catacomb, infested with over-sized creepy crawlies and bugs. The walls of the cavern are lined with deadly polyps, hydras and outgrowths which spit mines at you. Swirls of single-celled nasties continuously swoop down into the screen The further you progress into the level, the higher the nasties seem to come on the evolutionary scale. Towards the end, trilobites and jellyfish make an appearance, followed by the ultimate confrontation with a massive Nautilus Shellfish, a very deadly crustacean with a cunning mine-spitting tendril - one to be avoided!

Level two is fraught with beetles and insects and earwigs; level three takes a leaf out of FisherMan Fred's Angling Almanac, being literally stuffed with eels and piranha; the next level is



The end-of-level-one-nasty may look frighteningly tough and impregnable but it's 'all tendrils and no trousers'.

populated with dinosaurs; and then after a huge evolutional leap, we're in the future, characterised by the Bitmap's favourite metallic style graphics and spaceships.

Despite having primative brains, most of the creatures over the levels are actually quite clever (some of them might even be distant ancestors of Bamber Gasgoine). Gone are the simple slowly-descend-down-the-screen beasties, or sedately-slide-in-from the side nasties - the *Megablast* aliens seem to have minds of their own. The flight paths are frighteningly complex and lead on from one another. Just when you're congratulating yourself on escaping wave number one, wave number two tumbles right into you.



SHOP TILL YOU DROP!

Here's the place where you can pick up the most unusual of accessories. Mines, health, rear fire and extra speed to name but a few. No browsing allowed 'cos Captain Ugly wants your dosh!

1 ADVICE (£200) Bit of a con this add-on really, and an expensive one at that. If you try and buy it the dealer smugly replies, "But you can't carry that!" (subtle extra-terrestrial humour). Hints do get more useful after level one, though.

2 SPEED UP (£500) This gives an essential injection of speed into your motors, needed if you want to manoeuvre down those nooks and crannies.

3 HEALTH POWER1 (£500) Restores some of the energy lost while battling with the crustaceans. Like half a Mars bar.

4 AUTOFIRE (£500) A blessing for fore-fingers in distress. This will fire a volley of shots for every single press of the button.





ARMS EMPORIUM

5 **TASTER (£600)** Just to rub salt in the wound this is the ten second 'taster' of all the weapons. Quite useful at the start of a new level when you're most vulnerable.

6 **HEALTH POWER 2 (£1000)** Similar to the Power 1 variety, this energy-bank restores your power to full. Um... like a whole Mars bar.

7 **REARSHOT (£1000)** The latest in anal-artillery, the rearshot gives you vital rear guard fire and is essential for nabbing those 'out-of-the-way' creatures.

8 **MINE (£1000)** These seem fairly useless pieces of weaponry that just pop out of your bum and hang around, waiting for a creature to collide with them.

9 **SIDESHOT (£1000)** Absolutely necessary on some levels, especially level four, when cunning crawling little nasties charge out at you from side passages.

10 **ELECTROBALL (£1200)** Another useless item of technology, the electroball simply hangs about your backside, looking like an attacking creature. You spot it, panic and invariably collide into the nearest crustacean. (Duncan did, anyway).

11 **POWER UP (£2000)** - This effectively doubles the strength of your fireballs, thickening them until they can blast through and cook any tough alien hide.

12 **MINE (£2000)** Bigger and even more useless version of the big and useless £1000 – wasteamoney.

13 **DOUBLESHOT (£3000)** This directs a second stream of bullets from your ship, effectively doubling your firepower, or, if you own a pedantic power-up, quadrupling your firepower.

14 **CANNON (£3500)** This is a fairly useful side turret which constantly pumps out a barrage of cruise missiles.

15 **DIVE (£4000)** This allows you to slip between the scrolling levels, allowing you to dive into the scenery to escape a particularly nasty attack wave.

16 **MISSILE LAUNCH (£4000)** A two pronged missile turret that snugly and smugly fits on the nose of your plane, launching a volley of missiles at the opposition.

17 **LASER (£4000)** This sexy piece of hardware fixes on the side of your ship and unleases a bolt of pure energy right into your attackers. You can fit up to three.

18 **MYSTERY HARDWARE (????)** You have to be fabulously well-off to afford these last three weapons. Naturally, we know what they are, and naturally we're not telling.

LET'S GO SHOPPING

Shooting an entire attack-wave (or a particularly obnoxious end of level shellfish) leaves a bubble on screen. These bubbles serve as dosh, and are needed to buy weapons from the local corner shop, which you get to half way through and at the end of a level.

There's a whole armoury of sixteen add-ons available for the very rich *Megablast* player, but the poor scumbags (who have only collected three or four bubbles) have to make do with a meagre selection of out-dated hardware. However, to whet your appetite you can buy a 'taster' of the ship equipped with every weapon available - but this only lasts ten seconds, after which you revert to whatever weapons you had before buying it. The shops aren't the only way of obtaining weapons though - occasionally cannisters drift across the screen - these must be shot and collected to provide vital up-grades.

Not only are there creatures to fight, there's inertia to grapple with too. When you want to stop moving left or right your ship still drifts. Although the affect is slight, it gives a good 'feel' to playing. Luckily, collision with walls and the various rocky outcrops is not fatal - you just bounce off, pinball style (or get stuck, if you've got a lorry load of add-ons protruding from your side). Another original feature is the retro-rockets option which in an emergency allows you to scroll the screen down to slip under an alien wave.



These trilobites are the things you used to dig up in the garden and go round shouting "Fossil"!

If points were only to be scored for originality here, then *Xenon II* might not fare so well - but that isn't really the case. It's implementation that's the name of the game, and what we have here, implementationally speaking *(I can't find that one in my dictionary. Ed)*, is a game that delivers a technical knockout to all the other contenders in the shoot 'em up genre. With its fab graphics, parrallax scrolling, slick power-up routines and instant addictiveness, it's basically the bees knees.

'Bees knees' - now there's a stupid expression - but you know what I mean.

RELEASE BOX

Game ***Xenon11-Megablast***
Supplier........................***Imageworks,***
Irwin House, 188 Southwark Street, London, SE1 OSW

Price..**£24.95**
ST/Amiga
Shelf date................................ **NOW!**

Dunc. The Bitmap Brothers, eh? What a clever little trio of lads they are: *Speedball* was brill to the power two and *Xenon* was brill to the power three. The burning question was whether *Xenon II* would be brill to the power four. And, by cracky, it is. Everything about the game is, well.... sheer class! 'Slick' is one word that springs to mind. 'Stunning' is another. As is 'Sellotape' - but seeing as sellotape's got nothing to do with the review we'll pass on that.

Anyway, as you all know, this game is a vertically scrolling shoot 'em up. The point is, however, what a totally brilliant, amazing, unbelievable, *(that's enough superlatives . Ed)* vertically scrolling shoot 'em up it actually is. It's the crème de la crème. The battle between technical excellence and graphical excellence has resulted in a draw: the artwork is as good as anyone could hope for - and so is the animation. This sequel takes all the bits out of the original *Xenon* and, er, goes to the toilet on them. Colour is abundant, the three level parallax scrolling gives real depth to the backgrounds - which are a bit of a computer graphic masterpiece all by themselves. The nasties are designed and animated with sheer genius (and, no doubt, a hell of a lot of hard work) and the add-on weapons system is awesome: enabling you to build up from pea-shooter to 'super Nashwan power' (i.e. blast power so extreme that you fry everything before it even gets the chance to scroll down onto the screen).

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
There's a 30 second wait between the levels - but all those spiffing graphics have got to be squeezed in at some point.

The Bros seem to have learnt a little bit about addictiveness and playability since the first *Xenon* as well: most probably from the arcades - and in particular from *R-Type*. 'Out' is the "Oh brilliant, I've nearly got to the end of level two. Bang. Dead. Oh dear, I've got to start from the beginning of level one again. Actually I think I'll watch *Prisoner Cell Block H* instead". 'In' is the staggered restart position system: you only go back to the last 'trigger point' of which there are several per level. 'Out' is the "Lost Three Lives - End Of Game". 'In' is the "Lost Three Lives - Do you Want To Continue From Where You Left Off?". This transforms the learning curve from 'too hard too quickly for all but the highly skilled gamesplayer' into one that's tailor-made for everybody. Even Ali from *EastEnders* could make progress, given a few months. *(Are you sure about that? Ed).*

Now we get onto the music: a sampled Bomb The Bass track (i.e. *Megablast)* on the boot disk which becomes a computer generated mix of said track by David Whittaker in the main game. As all ST owners know, the Amiga *has* got a better sound chip, and the actual sampled soundtrack is what you get throughout the game. That's the only difference between the versions, but the way I see it is that you can always stick a Bomb The Bass 12 inch on your record deck and just select sound effects (which are rather good, incidentally) when playing. (I personally like to play the game to the wonderful *Bermuda Triangle* as sung by Barry Manilow, but that's just the sort of person I am). An 'ironic' little footnote is, however, that Tim Simenon (of Bomb The Bass) actually writes his music with the aid of an ST - so if it wasn't for this wonderful machine the Amiga soundtrack wouldn't be as good as it is. Erm, so there. (Or something).

This bit is especially for those of you who only read the last paragraph of reviews to see the summing up. Firstly, you're a lazy sod. Secondly, *Xenon II - Megablast* IS as brilliant as you were expecting it to be. Maybe it's even better. Read the review properly.

THE VERDICT

G GRAPHICS
S SOUND
A ADDICTIVENESS
E EXECUTION

100

Bros have surpassed themselves again! This is (to date) the DEFINITIVE vertically scrolling shoot 'em up on the ST.

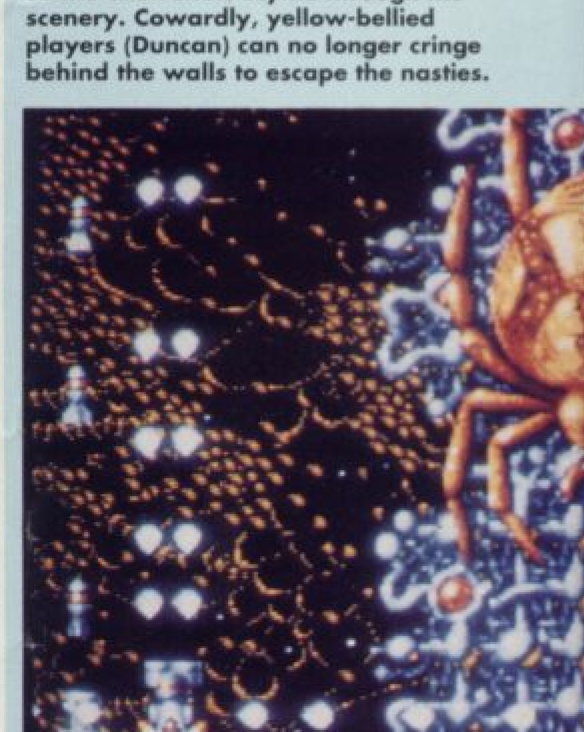
93



This grinning salivating gargoyle jumps about the screen and tries to grope you with its claw. A sort of prehistoric Jimmy Saville, you could say.

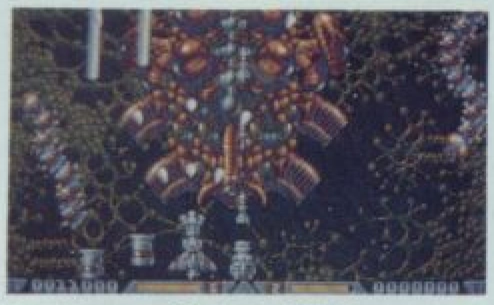


The rocks and plants provide no cover so the alien shots scythe through the scenery. Cowardly, yellow-bellied players (Duncan) can no longer cringe behind the walls to escape the nasties.

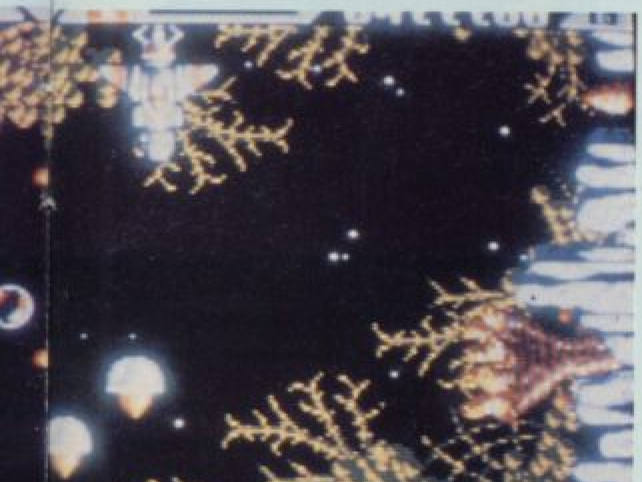




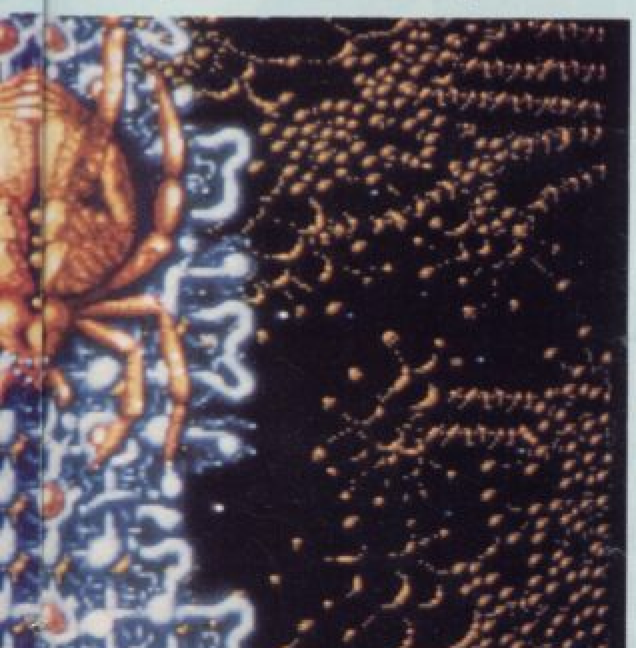
Things get tougher on level two. You have to cope with two mega-nasties, one in the middle and the end. This three-screen long monster is "all vertebrae and no trousers".



Here is your ship in its full glory with every weapon lovingly adorning it. Rotating turrets, laser cannons, rocket launchers bulging from every orifice.



At the end of level two you have to tackle a mean mother spider. You have to manoeuvre around to shoot it in the mouth while it lays babies and spits radioactive saliva at you.





This is the veined orange fungus ball zone. They leap out at you from the sides of the screen, repulsive throbbing sacs. You'll learn to hate them too.

AMIGA

Macca. A game of *Megablast* is a great spectator sport. It simply has the best graphics this side of the arcades. They are flawless, incredibly detailed, stylish, technicoloured (and all the over-used bum-licking superlatives you can think of). Games like *Blood Money* spring to mind when you mention good graphics, but where *Blood Money's* sprites were slightly caricatured, *Megablast's* are realistic and seriously hateable...

While playing this game, for the first time ever, I actually hated a sprite. In one section I went completely crazy trying to kill the veined orange fungus balls that were attacking me. I loathed them. I despised them. I wanted to rip out their entrails and cook them in a white wine sauce. I wanted to kill them. And I did. Very satisfying it was too.

Speed always seems to be a problem when you're dealing with hyper-detailed, hyper-kinetic graphics. But Bros have settled this problem by having slow scrolling backgrounds and (very) fast nasties. What surprised me was that everything was animated, even the weapons. The laser turret's nozzle rotates, the retro-cannon pumps out bullets, even the extra-energy heart throbs.The attention to detail is superb.

The Amiga soundtrack is nothing short of awesome. Bros have enlisted the services of the maestro, David Whittaker, who has spliced the original record, and squeezed all of it into the Amiga. The entire game is worth buying just for the intro. I sat there and listened to the Bomb The Bass track at least three times before I could bring myself to even begin playing the game.

You can opt either for a funky scaled-down version of the tune to keep your pinkies tapping while you're playing, or the in-game sound effects. Every weapon has its own 'voice': the lasers frazzle; the missiles woosh and the guns bang *(That's enough onomatopoeia. Ed).* These voices become a cacophony when you try the "Super Nashwan Power" taster.

On the gameplay side, *Xenon II* has managed to skirt the trap other shoot 'em ups have fallen foul of - that is concentrating too much on difficulty. *Xenon II* is geared more towards playability. Instead of throwing you back to the beginning of the level on dying, you start from roughly where you died; you don't spontaneously combust if you collide into the scenery; instead of being ceremoniously stripped of your weaponry, you keep it. Plus there's the credit and energy bar system to prolong your game whilst increasing its lasting appeal and addictiveness.

After *Xenon* and *Speedball* Bros simply could do no wrong in my eyes. But now, after *Xenon II,* I want to have their babies.

HASSLE FACTOR: 2
There is a delay while the shop sequence is loaded off disk and then the game is reloaded.



THE VERDICT

G GRAPHICS

S SOUND

A ADDICTIVENESS

E EXECUTION

100

Worth the wait, the hype, and its weight in gold. *Xenon II - Megablast* has the best music, graphics, gameplay and doner kebabs this side of Crewe.

94

HAVE YOU GOT KANGEROOS IN THE TOP PADDOCK? NO? THEN YOU'LL BE WANTING TO KNOW WHAT'S IN THE FIRST ISSUE OF.....



2 FREE GAMES WORTH £19.99 EACH!

RECOIL – ST, MERV THE MERCILESS – AMIGA
The first issue of ZERO will carry this absolutely brilliant – 'never-before-seen-on-any-other-games-mag-in-the-universe' cover-mounted gift. We commissioned two top programming teams to come up with two completely original games – one on the ST, the other on the Amiga. Both games are so addictive you'll probably never eat Marmite soldiers again. They've got to be played to be believed!

COVER GAME

Get spaced out with *Tin Tin Sur La Lune* . First full preview! Plus win loads of TIn Tin goodies!

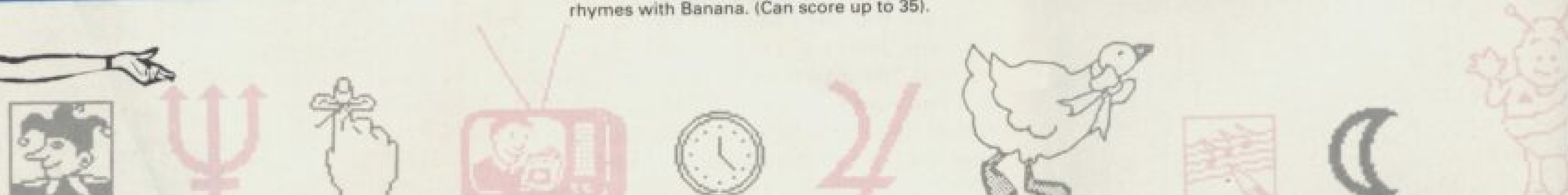
ZER

Picking up a 'Z' in a game of scrabble can lead to your downfall. Not any more....

Zenana: The portion of a Hindu's house devoted to females. It also rhymes with Banana. (Can score up to 35).

Zereba: In the Sudan this is a temporary camp guarded by a fence of bushes. (Can score up to 38)





WIN!

£50,000 WORTH OF AMAZING PRIZES

In the first three issues of ZERO we'll be running a three part competition on pull-out cards. Collect all three cards – map, clues and entry coupon to win 50 Sega Super Systems, 50 personal CD players and loads of games. Details next month!

CONSOLE ACTION

Britain's first and only monthly consoles mag. Within the pages of ZERO you'll find a mini magazine aimed directly at you, the console owner. Your own reviews, previews, hints, tips, letters, maps and news. A birrof alright!

• FLYING TONIGHT!

Duncan MacDonald takes on a real life fighter pilot in a vicious head-to-head! Plus we compare the latest flight sims – *F-16 Combat Pilot, Falcon Mission Disk, Bomber* and *Project Stealth Fighter*.

• JOYSTICKS

John Minson gets to grips with ten of the best! Plus news of some new sticks to whet your appetite.

If due to floods, fire or any other acts of Gud, any of this lot is not in the first issue blame God - not us!

DON'T MISS ZERO HOUR! – ISSUE ONE OUT ON OCTOBER 12TH

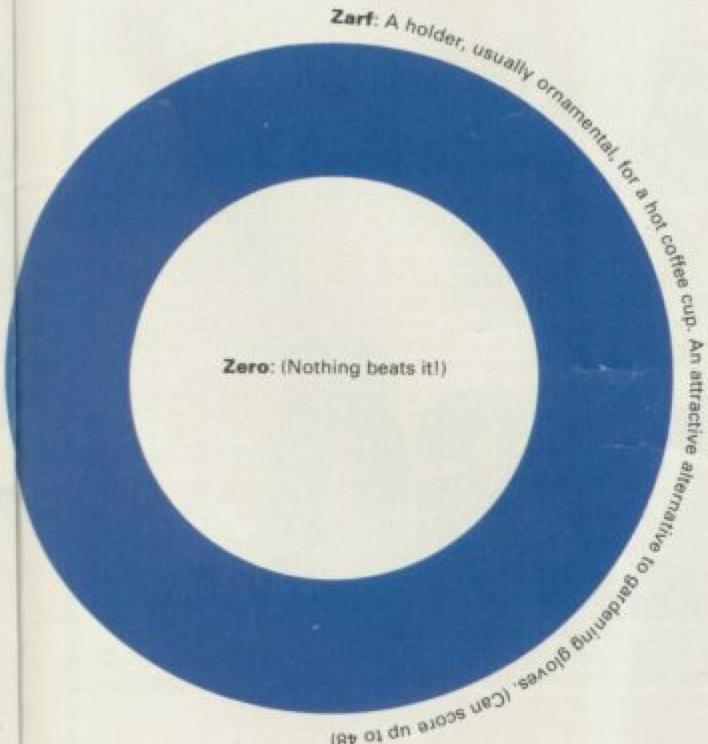


REVIEWS

The best in the world.*

Strider, APB, ShufflePuck Cafe, Paperboy, Battle Valley, Dynamite Dux, Californian Games, Populous Promised Land.

*Definitely.





And there's more....

- Hints, tips, pokes and colour maps.
- Adventures with Mike Gerrard.
- Music – use your computer to become 'bigger' than Luther Vandross.
- Artifacts – The art of animation, graphic design and digitised pictures.
- Competitions – win some really trendy gear!
- News and previews – ZERO's always first!
- Dosh Eaters – coin-ops coming soon.
- Under Wraps – Mega preview of a big Christmas game under development.
- Plus puzzles, cartoons, penpals, interviews and... need we go on?

ONLY £1.50 WITH TWO GAMES WORTH £39.98 - IF YOU DON'T BUY IT THEN YOU'VE GOT TO BE A REAL PLONKER!

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(ie zero pence)

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ZERO

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Crikey with an offer like that you'd have to be as daft as a Golden Retriever not to take advantage of it. For a paltry fifteen sovs (pounds to you) you can pick up a whole twelve issues of ZERO, that's a saving of £3 on the usual £18 subscription price. And since ZERO's only £1.50 an issue that means.. er ... you get two issues FREE! Brilliant. You mean you want to know what you get for your dosh? The most in-depth reviews ever, loads of compos, hints, tips and maps, adventures and need we go on? Take a look at what's on offer in the first stunning issue of ZERO, elsewhere on this page, and you'll get the idea. So fill in the coupon in block letters, enclose a cheque or postal order payable to ZERO and send it to ZERO SUBSCRIPTIONS, 'Worranoffer', 120-126 Lavender Avenue, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3HP. Offer lasts until the 31st Oct 1989.

IT'S A SNIP!

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

520ST-FM SUPER PACK



1Mb DISK DRIVE
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The Atari Super Pack is ideal for you if you want to get off to a flying start with the best in entertainment software. The Pack includes a 520ST-FM with ½Mb RAM, a built-in 1Mb disk drive, over £450 of top games and a joystick. If you buy the Super Pack at Silica Shop, we will add our own ST Starter Kit (worth over £200), Free Of Charge. Return the coupon for details.

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With SM124 mono monitor: £498 INC VAT
With SC1224 colour monitor: £698 INC VAT

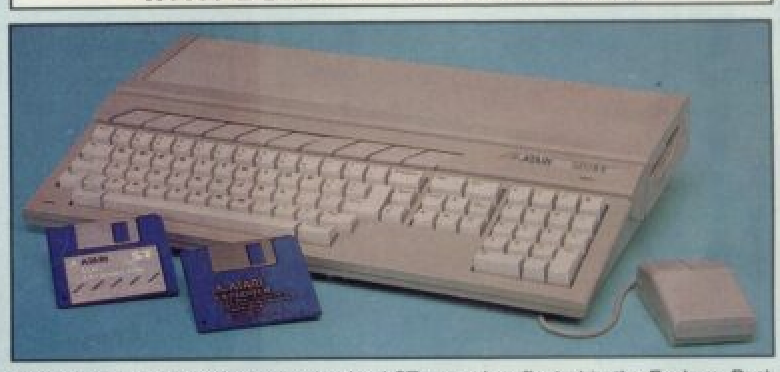
ATARI ST

ST COMPUTERS

The range of Atari ST computers offers something for everyone. From the games enthusiast who wants the challenge of the very best in arcade action, to the businessman who wants to make financial forecasts or faultless presentations. The ST offers high quality graphics, sound and speed for the gamer, whilst providing a fast, user friendly and affordable solution to business. The ST is now firmly established in the home environment and boasts a wealth of users in education, local government, television, and a variety of different businesses. Software for the range stretches to cover applications as diverse as ENTERTAINMENT, ACCOUNTS, ART, COMMUNICATIONS, COMPUTER AIDED DESIGN, DATABASES, DESKTOP PUBLISHING, EDUCATION, MUSIC, PROGRAMMING, SPREADSHEETS, WORD PROCESSING and more. For a full list of the software available, as well as details of the ST range, complete and return the coupon below.

All prices correct at the time of going to press. E&OE

520ST-FM EXPLORER PACK
WITH BUILT-IN 1Mb DISK DRIVE



The value for money offered by the Atari ST range is reflected in the Explorer Pack featuring the 520ST-FM computer with 512K RAM. The 520ST-FM computer now comes with a built-in 1 Mb double sided disk drive as well as a free mouse controller and a built-in TV modulator. The new 520ST-FM Explorer Pack includes the 520ST-FM computer, the arcade game Ranarama, a tutorial program and some useful desktop accessories. In addition, if you buy the Explorer Pack from Silica, we will give you the Silica ST Starter Kit worth over £200, FREE OF CHARGE. Return the coupon for details of our Starter Kit and of the full ST range.

£260

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NOW WITH TV MODULATOR

For the serious home user and the small business, we are pleased to announce a new package based around the 1040ST-FM. The 1040ST-FM has 1Mbyte RAM and a 1Mbyte built-in disk drive. In addition, the 1040ST-FM now comes with a TV modulator built-in. (The previously available 1040ST-F was designed for use with a monitor only and did not come with a modulator.) This modulator allows the 1040ST-F to be plugged directly into any domestic TV set, and comes complete with a lead to allow you to do so. The new 'Professional Pack' from Silica includes the new 1040ST-FM with modulator plus four high quality software packages including a spreadsheet, database, word processor and programming language. This 'Professional Pack' software will enable you to get straight down to business with your new computer. In addition to this software (worth £384.84), if you buy the Professional Pack from Silica Shop, you will also receive the Silica ST Starter Kit (worth over £200), Free Of Charge. Return the coupon for further information.



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2Mb & 4Mb MEGA ST

The MEGA ST computers are styled as as lightweight keyboard with a separate CPU, connected by a coiled telephone style cable. There are two versions of the MEGA ST, one with 2Mbytes of RAM and the other with 4Mbytes. Each version has a 1Mbyte double sided disk drive built-in to the CPU unit. The MEGA ST's do not come with modulator built-in and must therefore be used with a monitor. With every MEGA ST purchased, we will add the 'Professional Pack' software (worth £384.83) detailed above, plus the Silica ST Starter Kit (worth over £200) both Free Of Charge. Return the coupon for further details.

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+mono monitor = £1298
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DTP PageStream £149 +VAT =£171.35

Desktop Publishing (DTP) is one of the fastest growing applications for personal computers. We are pleased to announce a powerful low cost package for the Atari ST computers called PageStream. PageStream costs only £149 (+VAT=£171.35) and, because it works with an Atari 1040ST and a Seikosha SP-180AI printer, you can be up and running with a complete system for less than £1000. Some of the features of PageStream are listed to the right. If you would like further information on this program, complete and return the coupon below, ticking the 'DTP' box in the corner.

- * TEXT-FLOW AROUND GRAPHICS
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WHY SILICA SHOP?

Before you decide when to buy your new Atari ST computer, we suggest you consider very carefully WHERE you buy it. There are MANY companies who can offer you a computer, a few peripherals and the top ten selling titles. There are FEWER companies who can offer a wide range of products for your computer and expert advice and help when you need it. There is ONLY ONE company who can provide the largest range of Atari ST related products in the UK, a full time Atari ST specialist technical helpline and in-depth after sales support, including free newsletters and brochures delivered to your door for as long as you require after you purchase your computer. That one company is Silica Shop. We have been established in the home computer field for ten years with an annual turnover in excess of £8 million and can now claim to meet our customers requirements with an accuracy and understanding which is second to none. But don't just take our word for it. Complete and return the coupon below for our latest literature and begin to experience the Silica Shop specialist Atari service.

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If you already own an Atari ST computer and would like to be registered on our mailing list as an ST user, let us know. We will be pleased to send you copies of our price lists and newsletters FREE OF CHARGE as they become available. Complete the coupon and return it to our Sidcup branch and begin experiencing a specialist ST service that is second to none.

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PLEASE SEND FREE LITERATURE ON THE ATARI ST

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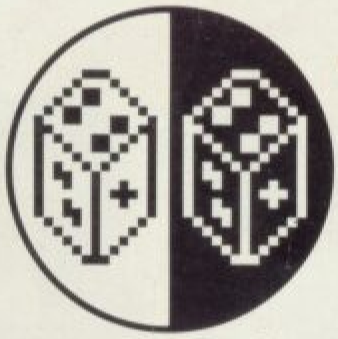
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Do you already own a computer
If so, which one do you own? ....

DTP ☐





WIN!

3 Atari STs & 3 Commodore Amigas

(WORTH QUITE A LOT OF MONOPOLY MONEY!)

That's right! Thanks to SDL who is forking out the goodies, we've got six spanking new 16 bitters for the taking – so if you haven't got one already you'll be able to join 'the club' for free (if you win that is)! And if you have got one already (and you manage to win as well) you'll be part of the 'new, rather exclusive club' of people who have got, erm, TWO 16 bitters! You can do things like sellotape them together, or balance them at 45° to the vertical to form an inverted 'V' shape. You could even – well, the options are endless really. And what do you need to do to be involved in this outrageously generous 'give-away'? Read on.....



Actually this is worth about 400 quid – that's the Old Kent Road to you, guv!





WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO....

It's all quite simple: you just have to answer a few questions. These questions in fact.....

1) What does the 'ST' in Atari ST stand for?
2) What does CBM stand for?
3) Which machine has the most annoyingly placed joystick ports: the Amiga or the ST?
4) What's the most annoying thing about the Amiga TV modulator?
5) Who is Brian Trubshaw, and why has he got nothing at all to do with this competition?

THE TIE BREAKER...

It's bribe time. We're going to be looking in your envelopes for money – not real money, but Monopoly money. The more you send, the more chance you'll have of coming through a tie-break in a win situation. The gamble you take is that if you lose anyway (because there was no tie break), and you've sent in all the money from your Monopoly box, then you'll have ruined your set for nothing, and will have to buy a new one. However, those of you with TWO Monopoly sets are laughing!

Don't forget though – you don't HAVE to send any Monopoly money at all, it's just that it MIGHT improve your chances!

WHY ZERO ISSUE ONE MIGHT BE A HANDY BUY...

Apart from the fact that it's the new generation in computer games mags, issue one could be handy for these two extra reasons...
1) We'll be telling you exactly who Brian Trubshaw is, and
2) We'll be revealing the Sultan of Brunei's personal telephone number.

SEE?

See? That wasn't so hard, was it – apart from the Brian Trubshaw question. Anyway, bung your answers on the coupon and send it to **The Brian Trubshaw (ST/Amiga) Competition, ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE.** Take note: the closing date for this is 31st October1989. Fail to get your entries in by then and you'll be in the position of having to fork out for one yourself – (unless you can con the Sultan of Brunei into getting you one for Christmas).

RULES

- Any employees of Dennis Publishing or SDL who are caught trying to enter this will be shot dead.
- Monopoly money cannot be returned.
- The Editor's decision is final.

My answers are as follows:

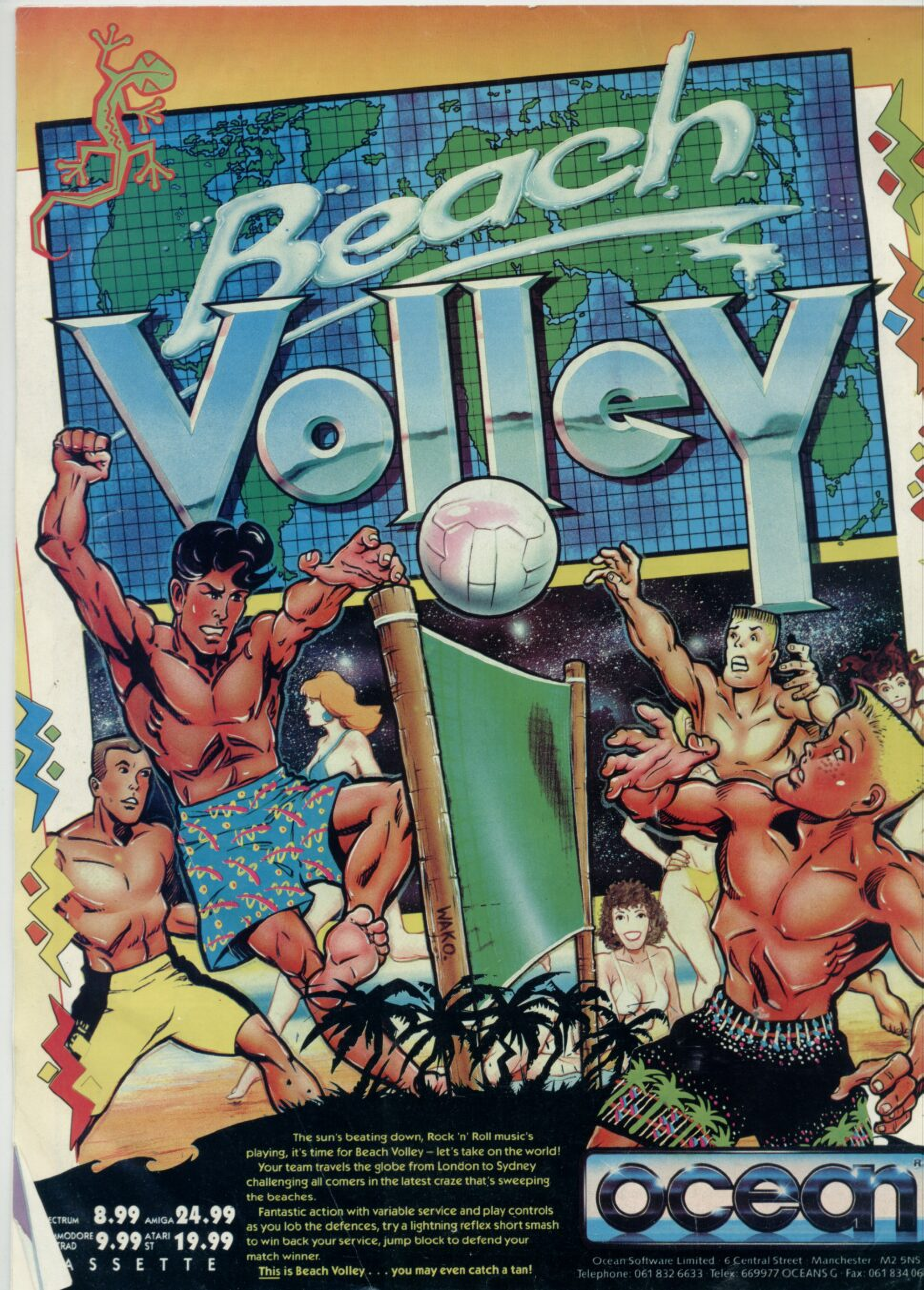
1 ______
2 ______
3 ______
4 ______
5 ______

And don't forget, tie-break bribes are to be in Monopoly money only. Any real money will be blagged by unscrupulous people this end – you have been warned!

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Beach Volley
WAKO.
The sun's beating down, Rock 'n' Roll music's playing, it's time for Beach Volley – let's take on the world!
Your team travels the globe from London to Sydney challenging all comers in the latest craze that's sweeping the beaches.
Fantastic action with variable service and play controls as you lob the defences, try a lightning reflex short smash to win back your service, jump block to defend your match winner.
This is Beach Volley . . . you may even catch a tan!
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